



**STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**61<sup>ST</sup> SESSION OF THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE OF  
THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE:**

**AGENDA ITEM NO 9: CAPACITY BUILDING IN SPACE LAW**

**28 MARCH – 8 APRIL 2022**

**Check against delivery**

## **Chairperson**

South Africa, as a developing country, recognizes the importance of holding discussions on capacity-building, to strengthen capacity to support the implementation of the international space treaties and the obligations arising out of these Treaties.

South Africa continues to strengthen national and regional capacity in space law, which is a fundamental component in supporting the implementation of national space legislation, policies, relevant strategies and programmes. This is to ensure that national and regional space stakeholders possess essential knowledge and understanding of the requirements and obligations imposed by the International Space Treaties that African nations are party to.

In this regard, South Africa continues to host the Africa regional round of the Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court Competition, in collaboration with the International Institute of Space Law (IISL). The Moot Court offers an excellent platform to help the steer the next generation of space lawyers and develop technical legal capacity on matters related to international space law.

In 2021, South Africa saw increased interest in participation from across the Continent, despite the COVID-19 pandemic hindering physical competition. As previously indicated, I am pleased to report that South Africa is currently organizing the African Regional Round in virtual format. The total participation for this year is a historic 22 African universities, with seventeen from Nigeria alone.

Over the years we have been encouraged by teams from the following countries; Uganda, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Nigeria, South Sudan and Ethiopia putting great effort in participation in this highly educational competition and wishes to urge other countries to consider participation in this highly prestigious global competition.

## **Chairperson,**

South Africa welcomes the concerted efforts undertaken by the member states of UNCOPUOS to fast-track the establishment of accessible opportunities through online and distance education learning platforms by incorporating tools for virtual attendance.

South Africa also utilizes various approaches to enhance capacity-building efforts in space law, particularly, through formal academic training for students interested in pursuing a career in space law, and through informal training and development workshops convened by space organisations.

These capacity-building efforts are aimed at providing requisite knowledge of the legal frameworks under which space activities are carried out, so that they can be responsible users of the outer space environment.

South Africa has also encouraged academic institutions to offer more comprehensive and multi-disciplinary introductory modules on space law and policy to attract a wider audience across the various space-related fields. Further to this, South Africa also continues to offer informal space law workshops aimed at cultivating knowledge-sharing in space law.

### **Chairperson**

South Africa also firmly believes in gender diversity and representatively in space-related activities and careers and encourages Member States and UNOOSA to further mainstream gender equality in their programmes to address current disparities and challenges women often face. This could include enhanced focus on STEM subjects.

**To conclude**, Madam Chair, South Africa will continue to explore various mechanisms to develop capacity in space law both at the national and continental to ensure that Africa is able to fully benefit from outer space activities.

Thank you.